RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 16th August, 1995/
25th Sravana, 1917 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*:

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Retrenchment of Safai Karmacharis' in Railways

†*201. SHRI SANGHA PRIYA GAUTAM:
SHRI GOVIND RAM MIRI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the job of cleaning of important Railway Stations in the country is being entrusted to private contractors;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of Safai Karmacharis' likely to be affected throughout the country; and

(d) whether Government would review the said decision and save the future of a large number of Safai Karmacharis?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) to (d) Railways undertake cleaning of stations departmentally. However, at a few stations cleaning work has been entrusted to private contractors on experimental basis. No Safai Karmachari has been retrenched as a result of this experiment. However, no decision has so far been taken to change the present system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 201. (*Interruptions*). Where is the Minister?

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: वे बाहर खड़े हैं।

डा. मुरली मनोहर जोशी: यह तो सदन की अवमानना है। पहले तो उन्हें क्षमा मांगनी चाहिए। मैं चाहता हूं कि पहले मंत्री महोदय सदन से क्षमा मांगे।

श्री जगदीश टाइटलर: मांग ली है।

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: The Minister cannot come late.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, I am sorry, if I am late.

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: सभापति जी, सफाई चाहे तन की हो, चाहे मन की और चाहे किसी स्थान की हो, सफाई बहुत आवश्यक है। हमने प्राइमरी स्कूल में पढ़ा था कि:

सफाई अजब चीज दुनिया में है,
सफाई से बढ़कर नहीं को शह,
खुशूसन सफाई जिस्मों मकां,
जरुरी है इससे को हरजमां।

लेकिन आज किसी भी स्टेशन पर सफाई देखने को नहीं मिलती। शौच के ढेर पड़े रहते हैं। मैं मंत्री महोदय से ज्यादा लम्बी बात न कह करके अपने पूरक प्रश्न के "क" भाग में यह जानना चाहता हूं कि आपने किन किन कारणों से किन किन स्टेशनों पर कितने ठेकेदारों को कब से सफाई करने का काम दिया? मेरे पूरक प्रश्न का दूसरा भाग यह है कि ठेकेदारों द्वारा की जाने वाली सफाई के काम की क्या आपने समीक्षा की? बेहतर सफाई और सस्ती सफाई की क्या आपने विवेचना की? यदि हां, तो आप किस नतीजे पर पहुंचे?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, so far as Safai Karmacharis are concerned, they are generally doing their work. We have not disturbed them. We have not retrenched them. They are all working. However, there are cetnin areas of weakness.

SHRI SANGHA PRIYA GAUTAM: Sir, excuse me for interrupting the Minister. मैंने जो सवाल पूछा था उसमें आपने एडमिट किया है कि फार एक्सपेरीमैंटल बेसिस हमने कुछ स्टेशनों पर काम दिया है.....

श्री सी. के. जाफर शरीफ: पहले मुझे पूरा कर लेने दीजिए।

Sir, we have built up infrastructure with the growth of traffic. The safaiwallas, who are with us, are not able to take care of everything. Sir, there are two parts of the station. One is the platform and the second is the circulating area which is outside the premises of the station. It is the circulating area about which we received innumerable complaints that we were not keeping the stations clean, this and that.

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sangh Priya Gautam.

As you know, and the House will agree when I say, it is the responsibility of the Railways to satisfy the customers. I have gone through every debate and there have been criticisms. I take every cirticism as a healthy criticism as it helps us to know our weaknesses so that we can take corrective measrues. Therefore, in some of the stations and their circulating areas, based on the traffic and where we have not been able to maintain the satisfactory level of cleanliness we have entrusted the job to a few contractors on an experimental basis.

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: मैंने यह पूछा कि किन स्टेशनों पर, कब से आपने कितने ठेकेदारों को काम दिया यह बता दीजिए। मैंने आपसे फिगर्स पूछी हैं। देन आई विल आस्क माई सेंकड सप्लीमेंटरी।

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: The Member is very keen to know about the details and I can read it out for his benefit. The important stations where the work of cleaning is being entrusted to the private contractors are: Raipur — South Eastern Railway; Surat — Western Railway, under the beautification scheme; Baroda — Western Railway, again under the beautification scheme. Important stations where only a part of the station is being cleaned by private contractors. Kota — Western Railway; Ankleshwar, Western Railway Ahmedabad — Western Railway, in the Reservation complex Baroda — Western Railway, there also the same thing; Jaipur, Meerut city, Moradabad, Patiala, Dhuri, Bhopal. The small road-side stations like Vikramgad Alot, Ramganj Mandi .....*(Interruptions)*.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: If it is a long list, you can place it on the Table of the House.

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: मैंने पूछा है कि क्या आपने इस बात की समीक्षा की है कि आपकी सेवा बेहतर और सस्ती थी या ठेकेदारों द्वारा करायी गई सेवा बेहतर और अच्छी है? इसमें आप किस नतीजे पर पहुंचे हैं, इस बात का आप मुझे जवाब दीजिए।

सफाई कर्मचारी जो काम करते थे वह बेहतर और सस्ता था या ठेकेदारों द्वारा कराया गया काम बेहतर और सस्ता है? यह बतायें कि कौन बेहतर और सस्ता है?

श्री सी. के. जाफर शरीफ: इससे काम अच्छा होगा क्योंकि इससे कम्पीटीशन बढ़ेगा। इससे सफाई कर्मचारियों को यह डर भी रहेगा कि अगर हम काम ठीक नहीं करेंगे तो फिर ठेकेदार आ जायेंगे।

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: मेरा सेंकड सप्लीमेंटरी। मेरा सेंकड सप्लीमेंटरी नहीं हुआ।

महोदय, आप जानते हैं कि सफाई कर्मचारियों की समस्या बहुत गंभीर समस्या है और इन समस्याओं के समाधान के लिए कर्मचारी आयोग बनाया गया है। हालांकि, यह शहरों की सफाई से संबंधित है। आपने इसमें आगे कहा है कि However, no decision has so far been taken to change the present system. इसका मतलब यह है, इससे ऐसी आशंका पैदा होती है कि आप सिस्टम चेंज कर सकते हैं और सफाई कर्मचारियों को हटाकर आप निजी ठेकेदारों को यह सफाई का काम दे सकते हैं। यदि हां, तो फिर सफाई कर्मचारियों के लिए वैकल्पिक व्यवस्था आप क्या करेंगे?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: We cannot do that because the Labour Ministry has clearly barred us from retrenching people and getting rid of the departmental labour. Secondly, during the course of the Budget discussion, I had myself committed to the House that we would not be giving up departmental labour. The point is that today the responsibility of the Indian Railways is to satisfy the customer. It is, therefore, that while we continue to take work from the departmental labour, the Safai Karamcharis, we also, wherever it is necessary, allow the engagement of private contractors depending on the volume of work. So, the whole concept is to keep our premises, our railway stations, etc. neat and clean so that we are able to satisfy the customer.

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM: But you will not retrench the Safai Karamcharis.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: No. We will not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has said that. Yes, Shri Govindram Miri.

श्री गोविन्दराम मिरी: सभापति महोदय, यह सर्वविदित है कि सफाई काम समाज के एक विशिष्ट वर्ग के लोग ही करते हैं। इस परिप्रेक्ष्य में मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि रेलवे में कुल सफाई कर्मचारियों की संख्या कितनी है और रेलवे में जो उन्होंने कांट्रैक्ट दिया है, जो कांट्रैक्टर्ज हैं, क्या वे लोग इन्हीं सफाई कर्मचारियों में से हैं और जिन को प्राइवेट कांन्ट्रैक्टर्ज ने इम्प्लाय किया है, काम पर रखा है क्या वे

इसी बिरादरी के हैं? उनकी टर्म्स एंड कंडीशंस क्या हैं, उनके वेतन क्या हैं और यह प्राइवेटाइज़ेशन करने के पहले सफाई कर्मचारियों की यूनियन से क्या रेलवे मंत्रालय की कोई बात हुई है? क्या इस बात से वे लोग सहमत हैं? कृपया उत्तर देने का कष्ट करें।

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, generally the two Federations keep on having a dialogue with us regarding the problems that the Safai Karamcharis face, their working conditions, etc. So far as these contracts are concerned, as I said, these are only on an experimental basis that we have started in a few places. There is nothing conflicting here. Whatever is being done is being done. The two Federations know about it. Wherever there is any difference of opinion between them and us, we sit together and negotiate it.

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Sir, I am not satisfied with the answer. I asked him about the total number of Safai Karamcharis. He hasn't given the figures. Sir, the Minister must reply to it.

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: He is not replying to the question at all. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: I wanted to know the total number of Safai Karamcharis likely to be affected throughout the country. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: But the Minister has said that they will not be affected. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, nobody is going to be affected *(Interruptions)* I have already answered that. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: What is the total number of Safai Karamcharis? *(Interruptions)*

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SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: May I know the number of Safai Karamcharis working in the Railways? This is may question. अगर होम वर्क नहीं करके आए तो बाद में भेज दीजिए।

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, I will be able to furnish the information later. I don't think they...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. You may give it later.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Sir, actually a basic policy question is involved in this aspect. I do not know how the Minister has lost sight of it. On the one side, we are closing the employment opportunities and on the other side, we are declaring poverty alleviation programmes! Where do we stand in between? All these things were started by the Government only on an experimental basis. Penicillin is given on an experimental basis and then only it is used. Similarly, now they have started an experiment in some other form. Is the "circulating area' not Railway premises? And, if you are not happy with the existing staff, the existing staff cannot cope with it, you will have to increase the staff. Will you apply the same policy to the Railway Board officers? It will never work. On the one side, you are closing the employment opportunities by privatisation and, on the other side, we are going on adding to the poverty alleviation programmes and also giving dols, pensions and other things. So, here the policy of the Government is involved. First of all, employment opportunities should not be closed. The banks have already started it. The *Safai Karmacharis* are being given work on contract basis. They come and work for one hour and for other seven hours they keep on waiting at the doors of the banks. The man is not fully employed. He is not fully paid. He does not attract labour laws. Who are these people? These are the people who are below the poverty line. The *Safai Karmacharis* who are below the poverty line are affected. I request the hon. Minister to have a relook because a policy is involved here. Don't be carried away by reports of the bureaucracy. Is it the policy of the Government on the one side, to close down employment opportunities and, on the other, go on including poverty alleviation programmes? Sir, please put a stop to this. Give them employment opportunities, give them work. Let them earn their bread and don't make them beggars before going in for poverty alleviation programmes.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, I fully respect the sentiments of the hon. Member. I have already said categorically that there is no question...

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: A policy statement should come from the Government that it will not go in for privatisation, particularly in the case of people who are below the poverty line..... *(Interruptions)*...

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SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, I will be able to furnish the information later. I don't think they...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes. You may give it later.

SHRI HANUMANTHAPPA: Sir, actually a basic policy question is involved in this aspect. I do not know how the Minister has lost sight of it. On the one side, we are closing the employment opportunities and on the other side, we are declaring poverty alleviation programmes! Where do we stand in between? All these things were started by the Government only on an experimental basis. Penicillin is given on an experimental basis and then only it is used. Similarly, now they have started an experiment in some other form. Is the "circulating area' not Railway premises? And, if you are not happy with the existing staff, the existing staff cannot cope with it, you will have to increase the staff. Will you apply the same policy to the Railway Board officers? It will never work. On the one side, you are closing the employment opportunities by privatisation and, on the other side, we are going on adding to the poverty alleviation programmes and also giving dols, pensions and other things. So, here the policy of the Government is involved. First of all, employment opportunities should not be closed. The banks have already started it. The Safai Karmacharis are being given work on contract basis. They come and work for one hour and for other seven hours they keep on waiting at the doors of the banks. The man is not fully employed. He is not fully paid. He does not attract labour laws. Who are these people? These are the people who are below the poverty line. The Safai Karmacharis who are below the poverty line are affected. I request the hon. Minister to have a relook because a policy is involved here. Don't be carried away by reports of the bureaucracy. Is it the policy of the Government' on the one side, to close down employment opportunities and, on the other, go on including poverty alleviation programmes? Sir, please put a stop to this. Give them employment opportunities, give them work. Let them earn their bread and don't make them beggars before going in for poverty alleviation programmes.

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SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: A policy statement should come from the Government that it will not go in for privatisation, particularly in the case of people who are below the poverty line..... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: The private contractors should not get it... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please give an opportunity to the Minister to answer.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, the question is that the hon. Members should also take the totality into consideration. While we have not retrenched anybody, ...(*Interruptions*)... Please bear with me. Whatever the Safai Karmacharis can do, they are doing. What we are trying to experiment with is the area where we need to improve. In other words, you want us to take more people, there is sufficient work or no work ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOW- DHURY: You have already done it, Mr. Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI: They are the lowest of the lowly. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOW- DHURY: On the one side he is claiming that he is not retrenching them. ...(*Interruptions*)... Let him explain as to what other jobs the Safai Karmacharis can be absorbed in ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, this Government is committed to the poor and the weaker sections, in particular, the weaker sections. There is no question that is any way it will affect the interests of the weaker sections. ...(*Interruptions*)... Sir, even if an iota of doubt comes that this private contractor is going to shut the means of living of the weaker sections, the moment we get this feeling, we will stop it. I am very categorical in this. There is no question of creating any restriction or shutting the doors for the weaker sections or the poorer classes. Those who need to have bread and those who need to serve, we will given them all protection. It is not in every field of activity that there are some private contractors who are being used and if some- where they are used, one should not think that it is at the cost of others.

श्री जलालुदीन अंसारी: सभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या इन्होंने रेलवे को निजीकरण में देने की नीति घोषित कर दी है? जब से यह

मंत्री बने हैं तब से रेलवे में सारे काम ठेकेदारों के जरिए कराए जा रहे हैं। अभी हनुमनतप्पा जी ने ठीक कहा, हमारे प्रधान मंत्री और यह सरकार रोज-रोज घोषणा कर रही है और योजना बना रही है गरीबी रेखा के नीचे जो लोग हैं उन को ऊपर उठाने की, लेकिन रेलवे में सफाई कर्मचारी जोकि दलित वर्ग से आते हैं, पिछड़े हुए हैं और सब से नीचे वाले कर्मचारी हैं, उन के संबंध में मैं इन से जानना चाहता हूं कि जितनी जगहों पर इन्होंने ठेके दिए हैं, उससे कितने सफाई कर्मचारियों की छटनी हुई है और वह क्या करेंगे जब कि यह बहुत योजनाएं बना रहे हैं और घोषणा कर रहे हैं? अभी 15 तारीख को ही प्रधान मंत्री ने अपनी घोषणाओं का ऐलान किया, तो समाज के पिछड़े और "बिलो पावर्टी लाइन" के लोगों के बारे में अगर रेल मंत्री और रेल मंत्रालय की यही नीति रही ...(व्यवधान)...

†[شری جلال الدین انصاری: سبھاپتی مہودے۔ میں مانیئے منتری جی سے جاننا چاہتا ہوں کہ کیا انھوں نے ریلوے کو نجی کرن میں دینے کی نیتی گھوشت کر دی ہے۔ جب سے یہ منتری بنے ہیں تب سے ریلوے میں سارے کام ٹھیکیداروں کے ذریعے کرائے جا رہے ہیں۔ ابھی ممتا جی نے ٹھیک کہا۔ ہمارے پردھان منتری اور یہ سرکار روز روز گھوشنا کر رہی ہے اور یوجنا بنا رہی ہے۔ غریبی ریکھا کے نیچے جو لوگ ہیں انکو اوپر اٹھانے کی۔ لیکن ریلوے میں صفائی کرم چاری جو کہ دلت ورگ سے آتے ہیں۔ پچھڑے ہوئے ہیں۔ اور سب سے نیچے والے کرمچاری ہیں ان کے سمبندھ میں میں ان سے جاننا چاہتا ہوں کہ جتنی جگہوں پر انھوں نے ٹھیکے دیئے ہیں۔ اس سے کتنے صفائی کرمچاریوں کی چھٹنی ہوئی ہے اور وہ کیا کریں گے۔ جبکہ یہ بہت یوجنائیں بنا رہے ہیں ابھی ۱۵ تاریخ کو ہی پردھان منتری نے اپنی گھوشناؤں میں اعلان کیا۔ تو سماج کے پچھڑے اور بلو پاورٹی لائن کے لوگوں کے بارے میں اگر ریل منتری اور ریل منترالیہ کی یہی نیتی رہی ... "مداخلت" ...]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. You are repeating the same thing.

श्री जलालुदीन अंसारी: तो सर, हम इनसे यह जानना चाहते हैं कि आप यह नीति कहां से लाए हैं? कितने सफाई कर्मचारियों की छंटनी हुई है और यह जो सफाई कर्मचारियों की छंटनी की गई, उनसे इनको क्या लाभ मिलता है? हम चाहते हैं कि रेल मंत्री जी इन बातों का जवाब दें। ...(व्यवधान)... हम यह भी जानना चाहते हैं कि अभी तक जहां-जहां ठेकेदारों के जरिए काम करवाया गया है सफाई कर्मचारियों से, उन रेलवे स्टेशन पर, अधिकांश रेलवे स्टेशन से बहुत बदबू निकलती है। उसके बारे में क्या कोई सर्वेक्षण हुआ है? यह हमें बताएं।

†[شری جلال الدین انصاری: تو سر۔ ہم ان سے یہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ آپ یہ نیتی کہاں سے لائے ہیں۔ کتنے صفائی کرمچاری کی چھٹنی ہوئی ہے اور یہ جو صفائی کرمچاری کی چھٹنی کی گئی۔ ان سے انکو کیا لابھ ملتا ہے۔ ہم چاہتے ہیں کہ ریل منتری جی ان باتوں کا جواب دیں۔ ... "مداخلت" ... ہم یہ بھی جاننا چاہتے ہیں کہ ابھی تک جہاں جہاں ٹھیکیداروں کے ذریعے کام کرایا گیا ہے۔ صفائی کرمچاری سے۔ ان ریلوے اسٹیشن پر۔ ادھیکانش ریلوے اسٹیشن سے بہت بدبو نکلتی ہے۔ اسکے بارے میں کیا کوئی سروےکشن ہوا ہے۔ یہ ہمیں بتائیں۔]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. You have said everything possible to say on this.

श्री जलालुदीन अंसारी: हम चाहते हैं कि इसके पीछे क्या तथ्य रहे हैं, वह सदन को मंत्री महोदय बताएं।

†श्री جلال الدین انصاری: ہم چاہتے ہیں کہ اسکے پیچھے کیا تتھیے رہے ہیں۔ وہ سدن کو منتری مہودے بتائیں۔

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, the hon. Member himself has answered the question. He says, अधिकांश स्टेशन से बदबू निकलती है। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री जलालुदीन अंसारी: आप सर्वेक्षण कराइए। ...(व्यवधान)...

†श्री جلال الدین انصاری: آپ سروے کرائیے ... مداخلت ...]

श्री सी. के. जाफर शरीफ: आप सुन लीजिए। आपकी बात हमने सुन ली, जो खतम हो गई।

The fact remains that, as the hon. Member rightly observed, the Prime Minister has laid a special emphasis on the employment problem, particularly of the people below the poverty line. Measures have been taken. This Government's policy is to help the weaker sec- tions and the poorer classes. Sir, so far as the Railways are concerned, in no way have we changed our policy. On the contrary, our policy and programme is to continue to recruit people, the Railways being the largest public sector undertak- ing, to take care of the poorer people, wherever it is possible. I have repeatedly made it very clear. I do not know why the hon. Members are simply harping on this. I have answered all the earlier questions. I have also disclosed all the facts.

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र: सभापति महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि सरकार कमिटेड है बिलो पावरटी लाइन के लोगों के लिए और शायद यह भी कहा कि कांट्रेक्टर सबसे गरीब लोग हैं इसलिए उनको नौकरी देते हैं और दूसरों को नहीं देते हैं।

एक माननीय सदस्य: यह नहीं कहा।

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र: नहीं, नहीं। इन्होंने कहा है कि कांट्रेक्टर को एम्पलाय करते हैं, दूसरे लोगों को नहीं करते हैं। तो हमने तो यही नतीजा निकाला कांट्रेक्टर का, कि... They are the poorer sections of the people. So they are employed. In any case, my point is that we have a law. In a perennial nature of work no contractor can be employed. It is a standing law already passed by us. This safai job—what he is saying—is of a perennial nature. He has already said that due to rise in traffice more sanitation is neces- sary. I agree with that. This is a perennial nature job and it is not a casual job. Will the Minister get this point—legal aspect—examined and tell the House as to what the position is?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, so far as our position is concerned, there is no ambiguity in this. We are very clear. The policy is very clear. The Safai Karmacharis who have been recruited by the Railways are ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: This is not my question. You have told about this and I am satisfied that you are not retrenching. What I am saying is this: In this, the people you have employed are contractors. It is a perennial-nature. Under the law you cannot do that. Will you get the legal aspect examined and tell the House what is what?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, to my mind it is permanent. If still there is any doubt, we will get it examined.

वाह और सागढ़ सिंचाई परियोजनाओं को स्वीकृति प्रदान किया जाना

*202. श्री राघवजी: क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने मध्य प्रदेश द्वारा भेजी गई वाह और सागढ़ सिंचाई परियोजनाओं को स्वीकृति दे दी है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण है;